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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/631,098	07/31/2003	Steven H. Voldman	BUR9-1999-0193US2	7752
21254	7590	06/08/2005	EXAMINER	
MCGINN & GIBB, PLLC 8321 OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD SUITE 200 VIENNA, VA 22182-3817			NGUYEN, LONG T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2816	

DATE MAILED: 06/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/631,098

Applicant(s)

VOLDMAN, STEVEN H.

Examiner

Long Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 April 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14, 15, 17-20, 22 and 24-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15, 19, 20 and 22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 March 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/28/05 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 14, 17, 18 and 31-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Au et al. (USP 5,528,188) in view of Brady et al. (USP 5,314,841).

With respect to claims 14 and 17, Figure 4b of the Au et al. reference discloses a device which includes: a MOSFET transistor (Q1) comprising a gate (gate of Q1), a body (body of Q1); an RC discriminator circuit (32) comprising a resistor (R) and a capacitor (C), and a circuit control network (40) modulating a potential of the body (of M) to provide ESD protection (the circuit of 40 capable of controlling the potential biasing the body of the transistor and therefore it also capable of provide ESD protection). The Au et al. reference does not disclose that the circuit in Figure 4b is fabricated by using silicon-over-insulator SOI technology. However, the Brady et al. reference discloses that silicon-over-insulator (SOI) technology provides advantages

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over regular silicon technology such as increasing the operating speed and reducing the power consumption of the circuitry (Col. 1, lines 12-15). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the circuit in Figure 4b of the Au et al. reference by using specific SOI technology to fabricate the circuitry for the purpose of increasing the operating speed and reducing the power consumption of the circuitry. Thus, this modification meets all the limitation of claims 14 and 17. Note that, in the above modification, the functional limitation in claim 17 is also met as the operation of control network circuitry modulates the potential voltage of the body and limit the body to a reference voltage.

With respect to claims 31 and 32, the modification/combination of Au et al. and Brady et al. as discussed in claim 14 above meets all the limitations of this claim except that the resistor R is a resistive-transistor. However, it is art-recognized that a resistor could be easily implemented in an integrated circuitry by using a transistor that has its gate connected to DC bias so that the transistor is in an ON state (evidence is shown in the Sasaki reference, USP 5,039,873, that a MOSFET transistor is functionally equivalent to a resistor when the MOSFET transistor is ON, see Figure 4c, and Col. 1, lines 21-22 of Sasaki). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above circuitry by substitute an always ON MOSFET transistor (i.e., a MOSFET transistor having a DC bias at its gate so that the MOSFET transistor is ON) for each of the resistors in the circuitry because they are functionally equivalent and for the purpose that it is easily integrated. With such a modification, the limitation of claim 31 is met as that the RC discriminator including a resistive-transistor and a capacitor (also note that because the circuitry is fabricated by using SOI

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technology as discussed in claim 14, so the body of the SOI transistor is floating with respect to an underlying substrate). Note that, in the above modification, the functional limitation in claim 32 is also met as the operation of control network circuitry modulates the potential voltage of the body and limit the body to a reference voltage. Also, note that the device includes a source S and a drain D (Figure 4b of Au et al.), wherein the source is connected to the resistive-transistor (both connected to ground), and the drain is connected to the capacitor as recited in claim 34; and the functional limitation that the resistive transistor and said capacitor initiate coupling of the gate when an over-voltage or over-current condition exists (recited in claim 35) is also met (Col. 5, lines 30-67 of Au et al.) and also because the structure of the RC discriminator connected to the gate of the MOSFET device of the Au et al. is substantially identical as the structure of the RC discriminator of the inventions. Also, Figure 4b of the Au et al. shows a PAD (PAD) coupled to the capacitor (for claim 36).

With respect to claims 18 and 33, the modification/combination as discussed in claim 31 meets the limitations of these claims that the circuit control network (40, Figure 4b of Au et al.) includes at least a SOI MOSFET because the circuitry is fabricate by using SOI technology (discussed in claim 14), and because every resistor in the circuitry is formed by using an always ON MOSFET transistor (as discussed in claim 31) so the SOI MOSFET in this claim is the always ON MOSFET transistors for resistors R1 and R2 in circuit 40 of Figure 4b.

4. Claims 24 and 26-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ker et al. (USP 5,631,793) in view of Au et al. (USP 5,528,188), and further in view of Brady et al. (USP 5,314,841).

With respect to claim 24, Figure 2 of the Ker reference discloses a device which includes: an n-channel MOSFET (Mn1) comprising a first body and a first gate; a p-channel MOSFET (Mp1) comprising a second body and a second gate; a first RC discriminator (Rn, Cn1) comprising a first resistor (Rn) and a first capacitor (Cn1); and a second RC discriminator (Rp, Cp1) comprising a second resistor (Rp) and a second capacitor (Cp1). The Ker reference does not disclose the device a first circuit control network for modulating a potential voltage of the first body, and a second circuit control network for modulating a potential voltage of the second body. However, the Au et al. reference discloses in Figure 6 a device that includes first and second circuit control networks (SCR 52 and 50, wherein the detail of the SCR is shown as circuit 40 in Figure 4b) for controlling the first and second bodies (bodies of Q3 and Q2), respectively for the purpose of improving the level of ESD protection of either a positive or negative polarity ESD event (see line 59 of Col. 5 to line 23 of Col. 6). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the device of Figure 2 of the Ker et al. reference with the first and second circuit control networks connected to the first and second bodies, respectively, for the purpose of improving the level of ESD protection of either a positive or negative polarity ESD event. Thus, this modification meets the limitations of the first and second circuit control networks as recited in claim 24 including the functional limitation "to provide ESD protection".

The combination of the Ker et al. reference and the Au et al. reference meets all the limitations of claim 24 except that the circuitry is fabricated by using silicon-over-insulator SOI technology. However, the Brady et al. reference discloses that silicon-over-insulator (SOI) technology provides advantages over regular silicon technology such as increasing the operating

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speed and reducing the power consumption of the circuitry (Col. 1, lines 12-15 of Brady et al.). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify above combination by using specific SOI technology to fabricate the circuitry for the purpose of increasing the operating speed and reducing the power consumption of the circuitry. Thus, this modification meets all the limitation of claim 24.

With respect to claim 26, Figure 2 of the Ker et al. in the above combination shows the n-channel SOI MOSFET Mn1 comprises a source and a drain connected to the first resistor (Rn) and the first capacitor (Cn1); and the p-channel SOI MOSFET transistor includes a source and a drain connected to the second resistor (Rp) and the second capacitor (Cp1).

With respect to claim 27, the functional limitation that the first resistor and capacitor and the second resistor and capacitor initiate coupling of the first gate and the second gate, respectively, when an over-voltage or over-current condition exists is met (see line 65 of Col. 4 to line 5 of Col. 5). Further, because the structure of the first and second RC discriminator circuit connected to the first and second gates is substantially identical to applicant's invention so it must functions the same.

With respect to claim 28, it is seen in the operation of the combination/modification circuitry that the first circuit control network limits the first body to a reference voltage, and the second circuit control network limits the second body to the reference voltage (both of the circuit control networks SCR in the above combination/modification are the same so they must limit the same reference voltage).

With respect to claim 29, it is seen that the two circuit control networks SCR in the above combination/modification coupled to difference voltages, i.e., the one that is coupled to the body

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of the p-channel MOSFET is coupled to the power supply voltage, and the one that is coupled to the body of the n-channel MOSFET is coupled to ground.

With respect to claim 30, the above combination/modification circuitry shows a pad (21, Figure 2 of Ker et al.) connected between the n-channel and p-channel SOI MOSFETs.

5. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ker et al. (USP 5,631,793) in view of Au et al. (USP 5,528,188) and Brady et al. (USP 5,314,841).

With respect to claim 25, the modification/combination of Ker et al., Au et al. and Brady et al. as discussed in claim 24 above meets all the limitations of this claim except that first and second circuit control network comprises at least one SOI MOSFET. However, it is art-recognized that a resistor could be easily implemented in an integrated circuitry by using a transistor that has its gate connected to DC bias so that the transistor is in an ON state (evidence is shown in the Sasaki reference, USP 5,039,873, that a MOSFET transistor is functionally equivalent to a resistor when the MOSFET transistor is ON, see Figure 4c, and Col. 1, lines 21-22 of Sasaki). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the above combination/modification circuitry by substitute an always ON MOSFET transistor (i.e., a MOSFET transistor having a DC bias at its gate so that the MOSFET transistor is ON) for each of the resistors in the circuitry because they are functionally equivalent and for the purpose that it is easily integrated. With this modification, the limitations of this claim is met because the first and second circuit control networks (40, Figure 4b of Au et al.) includes at least a SOI MOSFET because the circuitry is fabricate by using SOI technology, and because every resistor in the circuitry is formed by using

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an always ON MOSFET transistor so the SOI MOSFET in this claim is the always ON MOSFET transistors (for resistors R1 and R2 in circuit 40 of Figure 4b of Au et al.).

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 3/28/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With respect to applicant's argument that the modifying of the structure shown in Au to an SOI environment would render the operation of the device in Au non-functional because Au relies upon the body being non-floating in order to have the device properly operated. However, this argument is not persuasive because the body of the transistor in Au (for example, Q1 in Figure 4b) is controlled by the body control circuit 40. Thus, when the circuitry in Au is fabricated by using SOI technology, then the body of the transistor A1 is still controlled by the body control circuit (similar as applicant's invention that the body of the transistor is also controlled by a body control network) for the circuit to operate.

Applicant also argues that the transferring of the structures shown in AU and Ker to an SOI environment would also render the operation of the devices in Au and Ker non-functional because Au and Ker rely upon the body being non-floating in order to have the devices properly operated. However, this argument is not persuasive because the body of each transistor in the modification/combination of Ker and Au is controlled by a body control network, and when the circuitry is fabricated by using SOI technology, the body of the transistor is still controlled by the body control network (which is also similar as applicant's invention that the body of the transistor is controlled by a body control network) to operate the circuit.

With regard to the Sasaki reference, as discussed in the above rejections, the Sasaki reference is used to show the evidence that an ON MOSFET transistor functions as a resistor so that it is obvious to one skill in the art to use a MOSFET transistor that has its gate connected to a DC bias so that the transistor is always ON to implement a resistor for the purpose of easily integrated the circuitry and the circuitry is also fully integrated. Note that because the circuitry is fabricated by using SOI technology, so the MOSFET transistor that is used to implement the resistor is also an SOI MOSFET transistor.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directly to Examiner Long Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-1753. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 8:00am to 6:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim Callahan, can be reached at (571) 272-1740. The fax number for this group is (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

May 31, 2005



LONG NGUYEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER